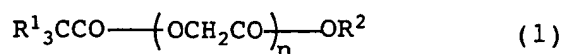


**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) An acyloxyacetic acid polymer represented by the general formula (1):



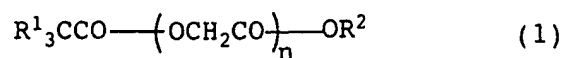
wherein R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>2</sup> are each independently a hydrogen atom or a linear or branched lower alkyl group; and n is an integer of not less than 5.

2. (original) An acyloxyacetic acid polymer according to claim 1, wherein the acyloxyacetic acid polymer is produced by condensing an acyloxyacetic acid derivative.

3. (original) An acyloxyacetic acid polymer according to claim 2, wherein the condensation of the acyloxyacetic acid derivative is conducted under heating.

4. (currently amended) An acyloxyacetic acid polymer according to ~~any one of claims 2 to 3~~ claim 2, wherein the acyloxyacetic acid derivative is produced by reacting a formaldehyde compound, carbon monoxide, and an organocarboxylic acid or a derivative thereof, with each other in the presence of an acid catalyst.

5. (original) A process for producing an acyloxyacetic acid polymer represented by the general formula (1):



wherein  $R^1$  and  $R^2$  are each independently a hydrogen atom or a linear or branched lower alkyl group; and  $n$  is an integer of not less than 5, said process comprising:

reacting a formaldehyde compound, carbon monoxide, and an organocarboxylic acid or a derivative thereof, with each other in the presence of an acid catalyst to obtain an acyloxyacetic acid derivative; and

condensing the acyloxyacetic acid derivative.

6. (original) A process according to claim 5, wherein the acid catalyst is a sulfonic acid type cation exchange resin previously washed with an acid.